

Now comes the intrigue that illustrates the split in the Belgrade Government. Without informing anyone in advance, General Pavkovic went down to the Presevo Valley and went into the Ground Safety Zone in a white jeep—in a white jeep, like some tinhorn dictator—stayed about an hour to assert his authority as Chief of the General Staff of the Army, and then left.

Deputy Prime Minister Covic, a decent man about whom I will shortly speak, was apparently livid. In a press interview he snapped: “The dogs of war must go, no matter how important the positions they occupy”—obviously referring to the Chief of the General Staff of the Army who rode around in his white jeep like some tinhorn dictator.

We should not kid ourselves. Milosevic is gone from power, but many of his most important henchmen in the military and the police are trying to hang on to their posts.

I hope, and expect, that President Kostunica—who personally emphasized his commitment to constitutional government to me 2 months ago in Belgrade—will shortly dismiss General Pavkovic, and General Lazarevic, and other military leaders who have Kosovar blood on their hands. President Kostunica must realize that this is a litmus test for Yugoslav democracy.

Mr. President, earlier I mentioned the so-called Covic Plan, drawn up by the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia.

In January, I had a lengthy meeting with Mr. Covic and his senior advisors. I judge him to be a genuine democrat who can be trusted.

In fact, he already has won the grudging confidence of most ethnic Albanians in the Presevo Valley with whom he has been in negotiations.

The Covic Plan has six fundamental elements, which are intended to create long-term stability, but keep the Presevo Valley as part of Serbia.

First, Serbia and the FRY commit to solving the crisis by political and diplomatic means.

Second, there will be no special status or border changes for Presevo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac. I am getting good at these names, but not good enough, Mr. President.

Third, there will be no constitutional changes. Ethnic Albanians in the area will be integrated into the existing system.

Fourth, representatives of human rights organizations and the media will have free access to the area.

Fifth, both the Serbian and ethnic Albanian sides in the area will demilitarize.

And sixth, and most important, the ethnic Albanians will be integrated into the political, economic, and social systems of the Presevo Valley—in other words, the new government in Belgrade pledges to reverse the shameful discrimination and persecution of ethnic Albanians in the area carried out by Milosevic and his thugs.

Mr. President, NATO's move this week was calculated, and it was a two-part gamble. First, we are betting that the new government in Belgrade has made a clean break with the ruthless, racist, and exploitative policies of Milosevic.

Second—and this is probably more of a stretch—we are hoping that the majority of ethnic Albanian guerillas will permanently lay down their weapons if they see that Covic and his plan are being implemented in good faith and is producing tangible results.

I should add that if the Serbian and Yugoslav authorities meet their part of the bargain, we should be ready to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Presevo Valley.

Mr. President, one, or even both of these gambles may not pan out. If that happens, we, in concert with our allies, will have to recalibrate our policies.

But in the highly complex and emotionally charged current situation, this agreement is, I believe, a risk necessary to take.

As I have said innumerable times on this floor and elsewhere, the stakes for the United States in creating stability in the Balkans are too high for us to walk away from this problem.

Either we remain intimately engaged politically, militarily, and economically or, I am firmly convinced, at some future date we will have to go back into a newly devastated Balkan area with a much higher cost.

I thank the Chair, and I thank the pages. I thank the staff. I thank everybody for indulging me until 7:20 at night. But, Mr. President, I think it is vitally important that we all know what we are undertaking in the Presevo Valley and what we are undertaking in Kosovo. I am convinced we have no choice but to proceed as we have.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I thank the Senator from Delaware.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands in adjournment until Monday, March 19, 2001, at 12 noon.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:26 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 19, 2001, at 12 noon.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate March 15, 2001:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

KENNETH I. JUSTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR EXPORT ADMINISTRATION, VICE WILLIAM ALAN REINSCH, RESIGNED.